Allandale Neighbor

June 2015
Vol 30, Issue 3

Distributed to more than 4,500 homes by the Allandale Neighborhood Association

They're Loud. They're Proud. They're Yellowpine!

The place was Bullard Drive. The time was 9:00 a.m. The event was Allandale's 2014 July 4th Parade. First place winners in the Floats category (these two yellow-shirted coolsters were just the tip of the iceberg) and winners of the President's Choice Award, Yellowpine claimed—and earned—the title "Coolest Street in Allandale." It's going to take a tremendous effort to knock Yellowpine off that throne. Will any street, road, lane, court, trail, drive, circle, place, terrace, avenue, parkway, or boulevard in Allandale even dare to try? Allandalers, start plotting. Countdown to the 2015 Allandale 4th of July Parade has begun!

Upcoming in the 'Hood: ANA Value Continued

Editors Note: In April, ANA hosted a property tax forum that was lightly attended, but shared great value. In May, ANA coordinated our annual neighborhood-wide garage sale as well as a Picnic in NW Park. Coming up on June 18th is the Energy & Water Conservation seminar, and July will feature our much celebrated annual 4th of July parade. Your ANA continues to bring you great value and interesting learning opportunities at least once a month. Please support ANA by paying your annual dues.

See ANA Seminar Series on page 3 for more information on upcoming events.

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ANA can always use more help. If you're interested in serving on any committee, please contact Kata Carbone (512-454-6571, allandale.neighborhood@gmail.com) to volunteer.

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ANA Executive Committee meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at NW Rec Center. General Membership meetings are held in March and September.

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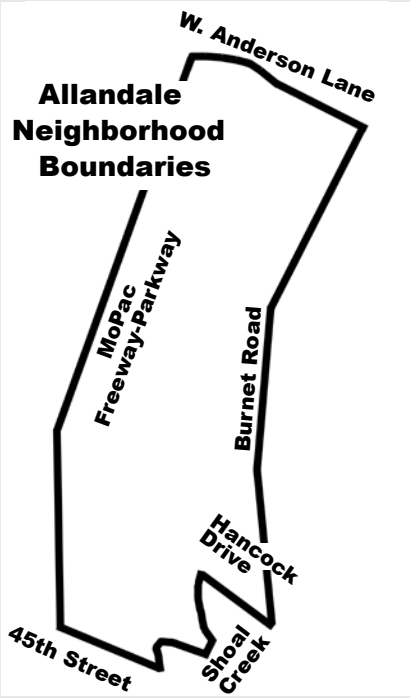

President's Letter

Kata Carbone, (512-454-6571, allandale.neighborhood@gmail.com)

Two items taking much of our time and attention have been Proposed Unit Development (PUD) zoning cases **Austin Oaks** at MoPac and Spicewood Springs Road, and **The Grove at Shoal Creek** at 45th Street and Bull Creek Road. Both cases illustrate the many layers of complexity that make PUDs so difficult and time consuming to process. While dissimilar in terms of size, design, and use, both developments would result in dramatic impacts to traffic congestion, densities and intensities of use that many feel exceed area capacity. The recent disastrous floods underscore concerns about inadequate infrastructure that is not keeping pace with Austin's development explosion and resulting impervious cover.

The Grove's MileStone Community Builders has held two large community meetings and continues to meet regularly with area residents, neighborhood associations, and with the Bull Creek Road Coalition of adjacent neighborhoods.

The Drenner Group, representing Austin Oaks presented their latest proposal to the ANA EC in May, and is holding two community meetings for residents of the "four corners" neighborhoods (Allandale, Balcones Civic, NW Civic, and N. Shoal Creek) to attend. Both meetings—Thursday, June 11 & Monday, June 15—will be held at the Dell Jewish Community Center, 7300 Hart Lane, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., and will cover the same content.

On to one of Allandale's jewels: as mentioned in our last newsletter, Beverly S. Sheffield Northwest District Park needs help (you can read about who our park is named after on page 7). ANA's ad hoc NW Park Committee compiled a list of needs and desires rated **Critical** (slope erosion, bathrooms, pool), **Large** (covered pavilion, walkway connectivity), and **Small** (tree care, graffiti abatement, shade for playground and basketball courts).

Our attention turned to NW Pool following reports from Allandalers that the cracked hardscape around the pool creates a trip and slip hazard, bathrooms are in poor shape, ladders make entry into the pool difficult—just to name a few concerns. We found that the 2013 Aquatic Facilities Needs Assessment recommends replacement of our nearly 60-year-old pool (the full report is available at ftp://ftp.ci.austin.tx.us/aquaticsassessment/). Recommendations to keep the pool operating at minimum levels are so costly (including water waste) as to render renovations unsustainable, and at any event, the pool is subject to imminent failure.

Contact me if you want to get involved to help explore remedies that best serve park users, plan community meetings to prioritize park and pool improvements, lobby for funds during the next bond cycle, and identify fundraising, grant, and sponsorship opportunities. To that end, please take this brief online survey to get

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our park's needs on PARD's radar (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bsnorthwest).

ANA continues organizing annual events and monthly seminars. January: Tree Pruning Workshop; February: Take 10 CPR Training; March: Safety Seminar, and It's My Park Day; April: Property Tax Forum; May: Annual Garage Sale, and Picnic in the Park. Next up:

- **June 18, Energy & Water Conservation:** 6:00–8:00 p.m., NW Recreation Center
- **July 4, Allandale's 56th Annual 4th of July Parade:** Assemble at 8:30 a.m., corner of White Rock & Bullard Drive

We can always use more help. If you're interested in serving on any committee, please contact me or any of the ANA EC members or committee chairs to volunteer. ❖

ANA Seminar Series

Energy & Water Conservation
When: Thursday, June 18, 2015
- 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Where: Northwest Recreation Center
- 2913 Northland Drive

Don't be shocked by high utility bills—learn to conserve! Austin Energy and Austin Water Utility representatives will provide us with tips to reduce water and electric costs.

Austin Energy will show us how to use our thermostats to keep our homes cool and throughout the summer without resorting to refrigerator-like temperatures. They'll let us know how much we save when we buy a compact florescent or LED bulb (you can start here to see how much energy your appliances are using: www.cpi.coop/my-account/online-usage-calculator). Air conditioning is the largest electrical cost and is related to the difference between the temperature of your roof (typically 120° F in the sun) and the temperature in your home (typically 75° F)—a whopping 45° difference. Simply planting a tree or two to shade the south side of your house can drop the roof temperature to 99° and substantially reduce your electric bill.

Austin Water will suggest the best drought-tolerant trees, grass, and plants for our yards and rain gardens. They'll give us an idea of how much it costs to let the shower keep dripping instead of calling an "expensive" plumber, and they'll show us how to check for slow leaks from the toilet tank. We'll have plenty of time to ask questions, such as how much water is lost when one of our water mains break. ❖

ALLANDALE IS WIRED

Current Allandale Listserve Membership: 1190+ (see Allandale web site, www.allandaleneighbor.com on how to join)
Average number of daily visits to the Allandale web site: 60

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ALLANDALE'S 56TH ANNUAL

4TH OF JULY PARADE

Saturday ★ July 4, 2015 ★ 9:00 AM

Watch the Parade

Spectators: Assemble along Bullard from White Rock to Gullett Elementary School.

Cheer from the sidelines! Wave at bagpipers, costumed citizens, drummers, scouts, fire fighters, public officials & personages.

March in the Parade

Participants: Dress up & decorate your stuff! Arrive early at 8:30 AM at the corner of Bullard & White Rock. This is your chance to win great prizes from fabulous area merchants in one of these categories:

- Animals
- Antique & Classic Vehicles
- Bicycles
- Floats
- Scooters & Skateboards
- Strollers
- Tricycles
- Wagons
- Walkers, Solo
- Walkers, Group

Join the Festivities

Everyone: Gather at Gullett after the parade for awards, games, songs, refreshments & more.

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A New Life for an Old Pipe

Michael Russ & Jim Shay

Periodically, Austin Water checks the city's concrete wastewater lines because sulfur in the wastewater becomes sulfuric acid, which deteriorates the lines. Recent inspection revealed that the section under Shoal Creek Blvd. between White Rock and Hancock requires maintenance. The city decided to line rather than replace the existing pipe, which was installed in the 1980s and is from 17 to 32 feet below street level. The work is currently scheduled for completion by the middle of summer, depending on weather and equipment availability.

Three Phases. This project uses a technology called Cured-in-Place Pipe (CIPP). CIPP is a jointless, seamless, pipe-within-a-pipe that rehabilitates sewer lines. A key feature of the new lining process is that it is trenchless; that is, Shoal Creek Blvd. will not be torn up. Mike Russ, the city's Supervising Engineer on this project, says the process involves three phases of work:

- Cleaning the pipe, removing large debris, and conducting a closed circuit TV inspection. This work was completed in April. Traffic along Shoal Creek Blvd. was maintained in both directions by shifting it into the bike/parking lane along the northbound side of the street.
- Setting up a bypass pumping system. Pumps will be set up near White Rock to intercept sewage flow and bypass it through two 18-inch pipes, which will be laid along the bank of the creek. These pipes will be pressure tested with potable water and inspected before pumping wastewater. (A similar setup was used earlier this year in Northwest Park after the same 48-inch wastewater pipe was damaged as part of a geotechnical investigation.) Sewage will be discharged back into the 48-inch pipe at the 49th Street right of way on the west side of Shoal Creek Blvd.

Lining the 48-inch pipe. Beginning at the north end of the project, the first section of lining will be placed into the 48-inch pipe through a manhole just south of White Rock. Once the liner is in place, cured, and trimmed, the equipment will move to the next manhole at Shoal Edge Court, and equipment will move again to a manhole between Sonora Court and Lawnmont Ave. During this phase, Shoal Creek Blvd. will be open to southbound traffic. Northbound traffic passing through the neighborhood will be detoured over to Burnet Road and back. Closer to the work zone, local traffic will be detoured through the neighborhood.

Interested readers can get details of the CIPP process by going to the manufacturer's home page at www.insituform.com and then clicking on the "Wastewater" tab.

Benefits. Mike highlights three advantages to the lining process:

- It will extend the life of the 48-inch line by at least 50 years.
- The lining will take weeks instead of a couple of years if the existing pipe were dug up and replaced.
- The cost of lining is less than half the cost of replacing the concrete pipe.

Price Tag & Schedule. The overall staging area for this project is at the south end of the Shoal Creek Greenbelt where the city has put up a large information sign. Mike says that the project is budgeted for a total of $2.2 million (the EPA is covering $776,000 of the cost) with the balance of funding from Austin Water's Capital Improvement Project budget.

The schedule is still in flux. Phase 1 of the work is complete. Phase 2 was planned for mid-May, but recent rains and Memorial Day flooding along Shoal Creek, in addition to various permitting complications, delayed piping and equipment set-up. Phase 2 is expected to take four weeks during June, and Phase 3 is expected to begin on July 6 and be completed by the end of July. Because the bypass piping will be located along the creek, further rain will delay the work.

For more information, contact Ginny Guerrero, Austin Water Public Information Office at 512-974-2461 or Geneva.guerrero@austintexas.gov. ❖

Conversation Corps: Your Voice is Heard in Austin

Shana Ellison

Have you ever attended an Austin City Council meeting at City Hall? Overwhelming! At least that's what it was for me. I've been down there a few times to show support for an issue I feel strongly about. First, no one can tell me what time I should show up since the meeting schedules and topics seem fluid. Then, after I negotiate traffic and find parking, I have to find out what I'm supposed to do to demonstrate activism for my cause. Do I find a group of people? Do I sign in somewhere? Where do I stand? Can I stand here? Goodness, there is a lot of process and procedure that, for an outsider, is very intimidating. I'm happy to say that Austin is now giving us another way to weigh in on issues of importance.

Austin has implemented Conversation Corps, a new public engagement program creating an opportunity for you to share your voice. The initiative is a collaboration between the City of Austin (CoA), Capital Metro and Austin Independent School District (AISD) and is being administered in partnership with Leadership Austin. "Conversation Corps will help us enable those affected by decisions to affect those decisions in a much more comfortable and convenient way," says Larry Schooler, Community Engagement Consultant with the City of Austin. "We know it can be tough to attend public meetings held at inconvenient times or locations, so we're striving to create enough facilitated conversations around our community so that everyone lives or works close to one and can easily engage in dialogue with their city, the school district and the transit agency."

These discussions are held in smaller, more casual setting all over town—libraries, coffee shops, and community buildings—and each month we are given a new topic for feedback. Last month we got to prioritize our most

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Conversation Corps: Your Voice is Heard in Austin

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important budget items for CoA, Cap Metro, AISD. Upcoming event topics are as follows (see Atxtalks.org for evolving details):

June – MobilityATX (https://mobilityatx.com)
July– Affordability
August – Community Engagement
September – Workforce Development
October – Transit Services

What can you expect when you attend a Conversation Corps? There's no need to register, just show up for the meeting at the time and place of your choice. Get there a few minutes early so you can settle in. You'll be greeted by a facilitator and have an opportunity to sign in and provide your contact information. The process is intended to be transparent so you know who the decision makers are and what decisions are being made. I highly recommend you provide your e-mail address so you can receive updates about what's happening with the information gathered on that specific topic.

The meetings last about an hour and are facilitated in a very specific way designed to create a safe, productive dialogue. The process has 4 rounds:

- **Introduce:** brief introduction of each group member.
- **Share:** each group member shares their thoughts, one at a time, uninterrupted.
- **Respond:** group members interact, respond to one another's comments.
- **Summarize:** the group selects the top 3–5 important themes to pass along.

Visit Atxtalks.org to find out about more about Conversation Corps and see which locations and times suit your schedule. On the third Monday of each month at 2:00 p.m., I'll help host Conversation Corps at North Village Library, 2505 Steck Ave. I hope to see you there! ❖

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Who was Beverly S. Sheffield?

Kata Carbone

It's no wonder we call it simply NW Park, "Beverly S. Sheffield Northwest District Park" is quite a mouthful. But Mr. Sheffield's namesake park warrants articulating every syllable. Also named after him are Beverly S. Sheffield Zilker Hillside Theater (home of the summer musical) and Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center (home of the "Splash! Into the Edwards Aquifer" exhibit, a simulated limestone cave illustrating the diversity of life in our local springs, creeks, and rivers). Mr. Sheffield's involvement with preserving and improving Barton Springs pool earned him the title "Patron Saint of Barton Springs."

In their "Defining Legacies: For Love of Austin" exhibit, the Austin History Center features Mr. Sheffield among a handful of worthy citizens whose contributions shaped our community. Mr. Sheffield is credited with establishing the Town Lake Hike & Bike Trail, Zilker Botanical Gardens, the aforementioned Hillside Theater, and the first lighting of the Zilker Park Christmas tree. This quote illustrates his philosophy throughout a 40-year career with Austin's Parks & Recreation, "I don't believe we can get too much open space."

Today our beloved Beverly S. Sheffield Northwest District Park needs some help. Just a little bit, really, in terms of the park proper: slope erosion control, walkway connectivity, bathroom renovations. Our wishlist includes a couple of big-ticket items, like a covered pavilion. But the most pressing issue is the condition of our pool. Assessed in critical condition in 2013, unlikely to survive the next five years, with potential for permanent closure, the primary recommendation was replacement.

Mr. Sheffield's first job with Austin's Recreation Department was Director of Aquatics. Something tells me he would be disappointed by the condition of several community pools around town. The park he was named after merits a new pool (the only municipal pool in Austin slated for replacement), and ANA aims to make it a top priority. We'll keep you posted as public engagement opportunities arise. ❖

Allandale Eating

Laura Beck

Summer is here and that means kids are roaming wild for 12 long weeks. I figured it was time to focus on the kid-friendly eating in our neighborhood. And while my 10 and 6 year old would likely lobby for me talking up the Gatti's buffet or Suzi's take out, I'm going to try to up the ante just a bit. Let's start with the arrival of Twisted Root Burger Co. in the old Hilbert's location (which was the old Taco Bell location). Twisted Root is a Dallas chain with higher end burgers and shakes. The Caddy Shack bar out front makes the prices worthwhile for adults wanting to hang with a drink, and the kids love the parking lot putt putt. Definitely a good place to meet up with friends this summer and catch up while keeping the kids occupied enough that you can have a couple of cold beverages.

The old timer in this same vein is Amy and Phil's, of course, where you can also distract the kids on the playground, and with ice cream, long enough to enjoy some beers with your burgers. And Hat Creek has their playscape too, which is ever more protected from the perils of Burnet Road traffic.

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Allandale Eating

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Kids weirdly love the astro turf area that La Mancha was smart enough to carry over from Jorge's. And while there are only 3 video games at Pinthouse, that—and a few quarters—alone is enough to keep your kids happy while you sample the microbrews. Just be prepared to speak up to be heard, Pinthouse is loud!

Hat Creek Burgers Company

Another pizza (and fantastic sandwiches, and fantastic everything!) is Little Deli. Outdoor seating under shade trees, and BYOB—conveniently available just across the parking lot at the Crestview Minimart. For some reason, kids find the sidewalk and gazebo a lot of fun.

Perhaps a bit less expected is Fork & Taco. They have a great kids option with cheese quesadilla that my girls love, and the back patio area is quite nice even in warmer weather. That they now have margaritas—rocks and frozen—that pack a punch certainly doesn't hurt!

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	2012	2013	2014
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AVG SALES PRICE	$388,229	$432,225	$473,930
AVG DAYS ON MARKET	45	20	32
AVG $/SQ FT	$207	$235	$255
MAX PRICE SOLD	$735,000	$790,000	$856,250
MIN PRICE SOLD	$184,500	$277,500	$300,000

All statistics & square footage are from Austin MLS for single family residence as of January 7, 2015. For detailed market information about your home contact Jason Heffron, Broker.

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Neighbor Spotlight: Barbara Visser, Teaching Allandalers to Swim for 30+ Years

Laura Beck

It's 7:00 a.m. on Valentine's Day morning, Presidents Day weekend in Portland Oregon, where we are visiting friends. I'm jumping on my friend's computer, frantic to get my daughters in the queue for swim lessons with Barbara Visser this summer. I fill in the application (which just went live), and my friend, Stacy, back in Austin, prints off a physical copy and hand carries it to Barbara's house. This is serious stuff. It's like trying to get ACL tickets. Barbara is a woman in demand, her swim lessons are legendary, and you gotta move fast for your kiddo to have a chance!

We got in! Weee! And the girls are spending time at Barbara's pool right now as we kick off summer. With such a reputation, I figured it was time to shine the Allandale Neighbor Spotlight on Ms. Barbara Visser!

Barbara has been teaching swimming in her lap pool, nestled inconspicuously behind her house on Shoal creek Blvd. With 30+ years and teaching about 100 kids each summer, representing a lot of neighbors learning to swim under Barbara's guidance—including several second generation kids learning from the woman who taught their mom or dad. Barbara got her start in Austin teaching at NW Pool for a year before building her own business, and she's been teaching every summer since. Many students are from Gullett and go on to be swimmers at McCallum, or lifeguards at NW Pool.

Barbara had a love for teaching swimming from a young age. When she started lifeguarding at age 15 at a public pool in Pharr, TX, she would spend her breaks

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David Starry – Allandale Specialist

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Neighbor Spotlight: Barbara Visser, Teaching Allandalers to Swim for 30+ Years

Continued from page 9

teaching younger children to swim. She taught every summer during her college years, paying her way through school. Barbara's entire family, including 4 brothers, grew up swimming, starting at age 5, taught by their Dad, the swim coach. Barbara's brother, Charles Logan, is now the director of the Joe Jamail Swim Center at UT, and Barbara's husband, Will, is also a swimmer, swimming at Texas A&M.

Barbara and Will's daughter, Avery, has kept up the family tradition. She started swimming at age 5, competing at the national level in middle and high school, winning many national awards in triathlons. Avery just graduated from Boston University where she had a 4-year swimming scholarship.

Barbara says there was never a question in her mind as to what she would be when she grew up. She loves to swim, loves teaching (still teaches part time for AISD during the school year) and loves children. Teaching swimming lessons in the neighborhood brings it all together. And she says "getting to know everyone in the neighborhood is absolutely the best gift anyone could ever hope for. All these families that come to me are like family to me. It really hurts when I have to graduate a child and tell a family their child no longer needs lessons."

Barbara uses a teaching method whereby everything is taught in parts and in a progression, focusing strongly on stroke mechanics, efficiency, and technique in the water. Barbara gives kids examples and a vision of what something looks like that makes sense to them, always making them feel safe, successful, and loved. Barbara says she tries to instill in each child a love for the water and a desire to swim for lifetime fitness, "I like what I am doing and who I am doing it for."

As a Mom of two students, I can say, it's all working, especially as my 10 year old does her first butterfly stroke down Barbara's pool, and my 6 year old is absolutely in a full open mouth grin while backstroking! Thank you, Barbara, for all you've taught my girls, and the 3,000 other students who have learned from you and felt your sincere, infectious love for swimming, and for them! ❖

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Bug Off! Four-Lined Plant Bugs

Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist

Four-lined plant bugs are brightly colored. Nymphs (immatures) are red, while older nymphs start to have wing pads with yellow and black stripes. Adults have fully developed wings that are yellow and black striped. Adults look similar to, and may be mistaken for, striped cucumber beetles.

These insects have piercing-sucking mouthparts that they use to suck out plant juices. The plant bugs suck out chlorophyll and leave a "window" between the upper and lower epidermis of the leaf. Damage appears as white, dark, or translucent spots on foliage and is sometimes mistaken for fungal damage (foliar feeding may also cause curling and browning). Fortunately, damage is mostly cosmetic, but if you are planning to eat the foliage of the damaged plant, it may be a problem.

The insects feed on a wide variety of hosts, including fruits and vegetables, annuals and perennials, and woody plants. When disturbed, the insects are good at hiding. They either crawl to the underside of the leaves or drop to the ground to hide among foliage.

If you feel the need to manage these insects, try insecticidal soap. If that doesn't work, you can try pyrethrins or azadirachtin (neem concentrate—not oil—it's getting too hot to use oil formulations). If that doesn't work, try a residual contact product.

For more information or help with identification, contact me at 512-854-9600, and check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com. ❖

Coyotes in Allandale

Kata Carbone

Fear Factor. Driving home late one night this spring, Christine Derbyshire was alarmed to see a coyote in her front yard on West Frances. At first she thought it was a skinny dog, but the big ears tipped her off that it was a coyote, so Christine called 311. Wondering where the coyote was going, she followed in her vehicle and watched as it trotted down the street, across Bull Creek, over to Hancock and down the side of the bridge to the creek.

Having lived in the neighborhood for a number of years, Christine had never seen a coyote or heard about coyote sightings in our area. She made sure to let her neighbors know and even mentions it to others as she takes her dogs on evening walks. She wants everyone to know how to prevent harm that could come to us, our pets, as well as to our wild animal neighbors.

Behavior Modification 101. Christine was surprised when I told her that coyotes are ubiquitous in urban areas such as ours that provide adequate habitat and an abundant food supply. Changing our behavior is the key to reducing human-coyote conflict. Because coyotes lose their natural fear as they become habituated to humans, it's important that we react in ways that startle and repel them.

The first strategy is to frighten the coyote away: loom large and loud! If you come in contact with a coyote, don't run. Make lots of noise, shout, clap your hands, wave your arms, throw rocks or sticks at them, and if you're driving, honk the horn. This method of "hazing" teaches coyotes to avoid people. But if you ever feel threatened by aggressive coyote behavior, call 9-1-1.

The second strategy is to stop feeding coyotes, purposely (they are not pets!) or inadvertently:

- Feed your pets indoors.
- Don't allow your pets to roam free.
- Secure your trash cans and compost piles so critters can't get to foodstuff.
- Keep sources of water such as fountains and birdbaths in fenced yards only.
- Keep the ground under fruit and nut trees picked up.
- Position bird feeders so coyotes and their prey (rats, squirrels) can't get to the seed.

Predation & Euthanasia. When coyote sightings and pet predations increased in Allandale a number of years ago, wildlife biologist Randy Farrar stepped up public education efforts. Shoal creek is prime habitat for all manner of wildlife, yet analysis of coyote scat in the area was found to be comprised primarily of commercial pet food. Three coyotes were euthanized following a report of a coyote attacking a dog that was swimming in the creek. Another report of pet predation stated that pets had been off leash at night in an unfenced yard adjacent to the creek.

Coexistence. The first city in Texas to be certified as a community wildlife habitat, Austin's coyote management policy focuses on education, hazing, and utilizing humane lethal responses only in the event of coyote attacks (City of Austin Resolution 20141120-088). Websites that promote harmonious and peaceful coexistence between people and wildlife include www.humanesociety.org/animals/coyotes/tips/solving_problems.html and www.worldwildlife.org. ❖

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Allandale Outside: Growing Herbs in Austin. You can do it!

Angela Caras

Trying to grow food in Austin can be a soul-sucking experience. Between unpredictable weather, insect pests, disease, and problems that seem to exist only here (tomato stealing squirrels, strawberry eating roly polies), it can seem to be more trouble than it's worth. And, honestly, sometimes I think it is.

But that is not always the case. There is one thing that even a novice grower, even here in Austin, can grow successfully: herbs. Herbs can be grown in pots, in a garden, and even in our crummy local soil. They aren't terribly picky about sunlight, and many of them are drought tolerant. Also, they are one of the few things that can be planted in the summer. You will almost definitely get your money's worth from herbs, as they will typically just keep growing and growing and growing.

In Austin, we normally have two growing seasons: cool (late fall through early spring) and hot (the rest of the year). I think with herbs it's fair to add a third season (warm), which typically encompasses fall and spring. It's crucial that you know when to plant your herbs. For instance, cilantro planted in June will bolt (quickly go to seed) and of course basil planted in November will likely freeze. Now is not the time for cold or warm season herbs, but that still leaves you with a lot of choices. Right now is a great time to plant bay, oregano, marjoram, chives, basil, fennel, rosemary, sage, mint, and thyme. Not coincidentally, these are also some of your most drought tolerant herbs.

Speaking of drought tolerant, one great thing about many herbs is that you can use them for low-water landscaping. We've all seen rosemary used in xeriscaping, but bay trees, marjoram, oregano, chives, sage, and thyme can also be part of your landscaping, and they are all perennials here in Austin, so they will just keep growing. Attractive, drought tolerant, and delicious—could you ask for anything more?

Of course, before you integrate those herbs into your landscape, be sure you are aware of just how big they can get. That cute little sprout of marjoram can become a bush several feet tall and very, very wide, and fennel can grow as tall as six feet (although I have not seen it reach that height here in Austin). And of course bay laurels can become bushy trees 10 to 15 feet tall.

When considering whether an herb might be drought tolerant, look for herbs that are native to the Mediterranean as well as herbs that have leaves that are either thick (like rosemary) or stiff and waxy (like bay laurel), as these help the plants conserve water. I have also read that herbs with hairy or silvery leaves are more likely to be drought tolerant.

Regardless of how drought tolerant these plants are when mature, it is crucial that you give your young plants enough water to give them a good start. Once they are well rooted and flourishing, they should not need much. Of course, watering them more will encourage them to grow more, giving you more to eat, but even if you water infrequently they will still grow.

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Besides water, all plants of course need sunlight. This is another area where herbs shine. While all plants need some sun—and the more sun your herbs get the better they will grow—all herbs can tolerate more shade than fruiting plants. In my experience, even a few hours a day of direct sun can be enough in some cases (however, you don't want to plant them in areas that receive only dappled sun, like directly under big trees). Do bear in mind that the more sun your herbs receive, the more water they will want, so if you don't want to have to water them much you shouldn't plant them in a full sun area.

What about cold weather? In my experience, most herbs (basil being a notable exception) can tolerate temperatures down to around freezing with no problem. If the weather is going to drop below freezing, you might want to think about covering them up. I will admit that I almost never cover my herbs—worst case scenario, they will die back to the ground and grow back from the roots.

Another great thing about herbs is that they can be grown in pots. Of course, most plants can be grown in pots, but unlike many other plants, herbs will actually thrive in pots. Remember, however, that a plant in a pot is completely dependent on you, and will need regular watering as it cannot just root deeper into the ground to find moist soil.

One last great thing about herbs is that many of them actually grow better if they are cut back fairly frequently, as it encourages a more bushy growth pattern (i.e., more leaves that you can eat). This is particularly the case with basil. In fact, with basil, one of the first things you should do once your plant has more than two sets of leaves is to pinch off the top set of leaves right above where the next set of leaves is growing (and eat what you've just pinched off, obviously). Other herbs will do better if you pinch them, but in my experience basil really needs this.

I've been growing food here in Austin (with mixed success) for many years. And I can tell you that there is nothing you can grow that will be easier than herbs. I strongly encourage you to plant some just to see how easy it is! ❖

Gullett Good News

Debbie Trominski

Gullett is a school like no other place and our Geckos had a great 2014–2015 school year. The year ended with lots of fun activities, including a Fitness Night and Bike Rodeo, a half-price book fair, and the kindergarten class selling popsicles to raise money to help others in need.

Many Geckos showcased their talent during the last week of school with a talent show that included many impressive and over-the-top acts. Speaking of talent, be sure to watch members of the Gullett choir perform at the Allandale 4th of July Parade on the morning of, you guessed it, July 4th.

The gardens and landscape at Gullett aren't as lucky as the kids and don't get to take the summer off. This means the plants need your help to be watered over the summer so the Geckos can come back to the lush, vibrant environment that makes our school so special. If you

Continued on page 14

Gullett Good News

Continued from page 13

or your family would like to adopt a garden plot or perform general landscape watering, contact Faye Holland at faye5909@gmail.com.

While the Geckos will be enjoying the dreamy days of summer, many of them will be keeping the school buzzing with activity while they attend the many fun, fantastic and hands-on summer camps. The kids will stay sharp and busy with activities such as cooking, art, science, sports and reading camps. Upcoming events include:

- August 20, 6:30–8:30 p.m., Back-to-School Skate Party
- August 21, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Meet the Teacher
- August 24, First day of classes, Tardy bell at 7:45!
- August 24, 8:00 a.m., Gullett 101: Parent Coffee and Kleenex
- Ongoing—Check out the school calendar at GullettGeckos.com for announcements about Pre-K and Kinder play dates that will happen throughout the summer to help the children meet their future classmates and their parents to begin forming connections.

More Good News: Football Players Recognized Academically

Trojans Pop Warner Football is proud to announce that three Gullett 5th graders made the National Second Team All American! Congratulations to David "Major" Faught, Johan Holmes (Gullett) and Braeden Price!

The Pop Warner All-American Program requires a minimum 96% grade point average to apply. Over 400,000 5th and 6th graders participate in Pop Warner, with close to 9,500 applying to the All-American Program. ❖

LAMAR Middle School

All About Lamar

Gina Ross

Wow! What an amazing end to a great year at Lamar Middle School and Fine Arts Academy.

The first annual Lamar Spring Art Festival was held at the school on Saturday, May 30. Students presented art pieces, many of them fresh from competition. The festival featured art for sale, a silent auction, art demonstrations, and interactive activities. Community partners Tacodeli, Tamale Addiction, and Little Deli helped out with food. Countless other community and family sponsors came together to help make this event a huge success.

The Lamar Choir performed their Spring show, "USO on Tour," honoring all branches of the U.S. military. The students presented songs from the 1930s and 1940s, reflecting back on a time when the USO entertained troops overseas. Each branch of the military was honored with a special song, while current or former service members stood and were recognized with a specially made card from the choir students. It was a magical night for all.

Lamar's Beginning Band received a superior rating and Best in Class award at the Hawaiian Falls Festival, and received first place overall! Many of these students had never played an instrument prior to this school year. Way to go Scotties!

Select Environmental Science students presented their semester-long EcoProjects to parents, administrators, district officials, and community partners. Students challenged school and district officials to put in place initiatives to reduce water consumption, grow fresh produce to be used in the Lamar cafeteria, decrease pollution by reducing car idling around campus, and increase outdoor learning time for students. These initiatives were adopted by the Lamar administration and will continue into next year. Three student teams were awarded grant certificates by the nonprofit organization EcoRise, and four teams will advance to the EcoRise Citywide showcase to present their EcoProjects to city officials and Mayor Adler.

Finally, Lamar said goodbye to the 2015 class of 8th graders on Wednesday, June 3 during the Advancement Ceremony at the new AISD Performing Arts Center. Friends and families gathered as students walked the stage for a final time as Lamar Scotties. Later, students celebrated with a picnic and swimming at Northwest Park and Pool. Good luck Scotties, wherever next year takes you! ❖

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It's Knight Time: McCallum Updates

Laura Beck

Well, school is out for the summer at McCallum, and we congratulate the Class of 2015! Do us proud wherever you go, and know you are always welcome home—in Allandale!

There will be lots of action at the school all summer long, whether football or band getting ready for fall, or organizations hosting summer camps like the McCallum cheerleaders or Blue Brigade dancers. If you want your daughters to join these fun camps, here is more information:

- July 27–30, 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. daily at McCallum: Mac Cheer Camp. Register at http://www.eventbrite.com/e/2015-mccallum-summer-cheer-camp-registration-15578818666
- August 4–8, 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. daily, at McCallum: Blue Brigade Kiddie Clinic Dance Camp. Register with Nancy Honeycutt, nancy.honeycutt@austinisd.org or at www.mccallumbluebrigade.shutterfly.com

For more information, follow these links:

McCallum General Calendar
http://www.austinschools.org/campus/mccallum/important_dates.htm
McCallum Sports Schedule
http://www.maxpreps.com/high-schools/mccallum-knights-(austin,tx)/home.htm

Fine Arts Calendar
http://www.austinschools.org/campus/mccallum/fine_arts/calendar.htm ❖

Neighborhood Watch

Laura DiCarlo (ANA Safety Chair, lhdicarlo@yahoo.com)

Since the April Neighborhood Watch article, ANA's Safety Committee has monitored crime statistics, dealt with a code compliance issue, attended a Commander's Forum, trained two new block captains, and had meetings with the residents of the Allandale Condos, and with folks on McElroy. The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) has also given us some good news regarding graffiti clean-up at NW Park, and we have read and disseminated information regarding safety issues in Allandale.

Crime Stats. In April and May, there were four burglary of residences (BORs); one on the 5400 block of Shoalwood, one on the 6000 block of Shoalwood, one on North Loop, and one on Stardust. It is significant to note that someone

Continued on page 16

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Neighborhood Watch

Continued from page 15

threw a rock into a back window of the house on Stardust. The perpetrator tried to climb in the window but got cut on the broken glass and fled, leaving a trail of blood. The person did not enter the home, and nothing was stolen. No one was home but the homeowner's alarm went off and police were there within minutes, around 8:45 p.m. APD got a blood sample but never saw the perpetrator.

A neighbor noticed a white van backing into the driveway of the home right before the incident, but didn't get details on the driver or the license plate. This just reminds us that when something doesn't look right, we should go ahead and call 911, even if it ends up being a false alarm. I told folks on the listserv that I relayed the information—not to scare anyone or make it sound like we live in a dangerous neighborhood (we do not)—but to make everyone aware that incidents like this happen everywhere, and Allandale is no exception. That is why we have to harden the target of our homes and vehicles and help catch those who attempt to break into our homes by giving the police accurate and descriptive information. So please install motion lights, close gates to your backyard, call 911 if you see suspicious activity, and as we get closer to the end of the school year, please be aware that students may be out pulling pranks as well.

We had one auto theft (on Park View) and five burglary of vehicles (BOVs) since the beginning of April. BOVs have occurred on Shoalwood, Pegram, Northcross, White Rock, and Janey. These numbers are actually pretty low for a community of 4,000 households, but we must be vigilant that with summer vacation upon us, the number for June may be a little higher.

Commander's Forum. Kurtis Krause is our new commander and ran the forum. Commander Mahoney moved to the violent crimes unit. Commander Krause presented a service award to a gentleman who aided police in a stabbing case east of us but still in our region, then turned the meeting over to District Representative (DR) Gary Griffin, who gave a presentation about their work cleaning up homeless camps since the APD reorganization back in December. The DRs focused on Research and I-35 but he also mentioned work under the bridge by 51st Street. Officer Griffin reported that five weeks after the clean-up, the areas are still looking good; APD will continue to monitor. This is what community policing is all about. Officer Chapman's presentation led to a discussion about homelessness and that some of the homeless are not from Austin but have come here because of the services available. Commander Krause is hopeful that the micro-homes being built by Loaves and Fishes out at Decker will lessen encampments in Austin.

Lieutenant Hannah said one of the issues APD has seen recently is that due to Austin's 10-One city countil, people are going straight to their council members instead of notifying APD of problems. This leads to a bureaucratic headache and delays in getting things done. APD has explained this to council and are asking them to send folks to the DRs. So if you have an issue that requires police assistance, notify Leslie Pool if you want to, but don't bypass APD.

APD said they are having trouble filling the cadet classes and asked us to encourage people to train to be police officers. APD is looking to reallocate funds to give police more time to patrol. So much of their time is committed, it's hard for them to just patrol. If you believe the city should add funding to APD, that is what you should be talking to Leslie Pool about.

Sergeant Alfred Trejo introduced all of the DRs, explained the areas they cover, and encouraged folks to contact them to help deal with ongoing issues, mediation, etc. Officer Josh Metteauer continues to be our DR (contact info below), and is working well with the neighborhood. He put a resident in touch with a code compliance officer regarding a condemned property this past month, attended 2 neighborhood meetings, and continues to help with ongoing traffic safety issues as well as education of our kids and adults. He can also conduct home safety audits.

Meeting with Allandale Condos. It's very important for us to realize that we have a number of apartment and condo dwellers in Allandale, and they are as much part of our community as single family residence owners. Condos and apartments are especially vulnerable to car thefts and burglaries because of the large number of vehicles located in one place, and usually not in garages.

Allandale Condos has been dealing with trespassing from non-residents that pass through, noise from non-residents who hang out by the buildings and by the Walmart palettes, and a couple of recent car and home break-ins. For those of you who don't know, The Allandale Hotel is no longer in operation and 172 of the 180 Allandale Condo units (in 11 buildings) are privately owned. Some owners rent their units, however, and eight apartments are owned by Easter Seals in which disabled residents reside. Residents of Allandale Condos met with APD DR Officer Josh Metteauer recently and then with me,

and at that meeting there was discussion of doing a Neighborhood Watch program. This will occur when more residents are recruited for that effort.

Meeting with McElroy residents. A McElroy resident contacted me concerned because in the last year there have been three kick-in BORs, a few BOVs, and suspicious activity such as a man jiggling the door knob of an elderly resident's house and then fleeing when the resident asked who was there. Officer Metteauer and I met with neighbors on April 20th in the driveway of a house on McElroy and there was a fabulous turnout! Officer Metteauer reported that the APD crime analysts thought there was a burglary ring last year that hopefully will no longer be an issue. We talked about the fact that reporting everything, installing 3-inch screws, etc., can harden the target. Officer Metteauer and I praised the McElroy residents for their fabulous email communication up and down their street. They are doing so many things well and are able to get the word out quickly if there is suspicious activity or something important needs to be shared. This also brings true community to the street even when there is no crime concern.

Listserv & Suspicious Activity. The listserv was abuzz mid-May with talk of a man walking door to door asking to check alarm systems. The stories were basically the same—he was sent by the residents' company to deal with problems, false alarms, etc. According to one poster on the listserv, "He was Anglo, about 35 yrs. old, wearing a shirt that said Honeywell on it, and an ID that seemed to have his picture on it and said Monotronics. I called Monotronics and they said they would never send anyone out without arranging it ahead. Before I caught on, though, he showed me a card that showed my keypad, and I did tell him it was like mine. My neighbor, who has the same alarm company, was not approached by this man. I reported the incident to the police and they said if I saw him again to call 911". Please be aware, although I haven't heard of this guy coming around in the last few weeks (I think he got the message).

I have also been told about a few other incidents, including a drunk man trying to accost a Shoalmont resident in broad daylight, a man on Rickey trying car door handles in the middle of the night, and—from Nextdoor Allandale—learned of an unlocked car being rifled through just north west of us on Cardin Dr. The important aspect of that post was the fact that even though nothing appeared to be stolen, the resident got a call from a credit card fraud unit that someone had tried to charge something online but didn't know the expiration date so wasn't successful. The resident must have left some paperwork or a receipt with the full number on it in the car. Don't do this!

Graffiti at NW Park. Working with PARD, NW Park maintenance workers will now keep paint to clean up graffiti on a regular basis so we will not have to wait for the graffiti unit to do it. To be clear, this will be for small jobs and they will not cover the huge amount of tagging under the Greenlawn bridge. I see this as a real win, though, because keeping the visual stuff at bay on a daily basis will keep the park practically 100% clean to most al observers.

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Neighborhood Watch

Continued from page 17

I'll close with some summer vacation safety tips:

- Leave a house key with just one neighbor, not under the mat.
- Tell only those who need to know you are going away.
- Leave inside and outside lights on a timer to look like someone is home.
- Leave a car in the carport or garage to look like someone is home.
- Report vacation activities on Facebook or other social media only after you return.
- Stop your paper or make sure someone is picking it up for you.
- Ask someone to check for fliers on your door when you're away.

Take care and have a safe summer! By our next newsletter, it will be time to register for National Night Out, which is the first Tuesday in October.

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Austin Police Department
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Landscape Summer Seminars

Caroline Reynolds

Denise Delaney (CoA Grow Green program) has organized all-day seminars for professional landscapers or serious landscaping homeowners. The classes cost $20 per day, lasting from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and will qualify for professional continuing education credits.

23 June, Water Quality and Integrated Pest Management
21 July, Water Conservation
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If you cannot make the seminars, there is a lot of information, including handouts and videos, available at www.austintexas.gov/content/1361/FAQ/2993. For additional information and registration, see austintexas.gov/department/professional-training. Contact Denise Delaney at Denise.Delaney@austintexas.gov or call 512-974-2581. ❖

Introduction to Bike Rights Austin

Amanda Haight

We've all seen those terrifying near misses: a car backs out into a bike lane, forcing a cyclist to swerve into traffic; a cyclist blows through a stop sign, forcing the driver with the right of way to slam on the brakes. It's from interactions like these that a culture of animosity is sometimes created between the driving and cycling communities. But what holds us all together is a common goal of getting to our destination, whatever our chosen method of transportation.

Sharing the road must be a joint effort between drivers and cyclists. That's why McMinn Law Firm has launched Bike Rights Austin, a resource that aims to cultivate a respect for cyclists alongside cars, answer questions, and refute common misconceptions while educating both drivers as well as cyclists on the rules of sharing the road. The firm recognized the movement by both the city and its citizens to make Austin a more bike-friendly city, but noted a general confusion from drivers and cyclists alike on the place of bikes on the road.

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Sharing the road

must be a joint effort

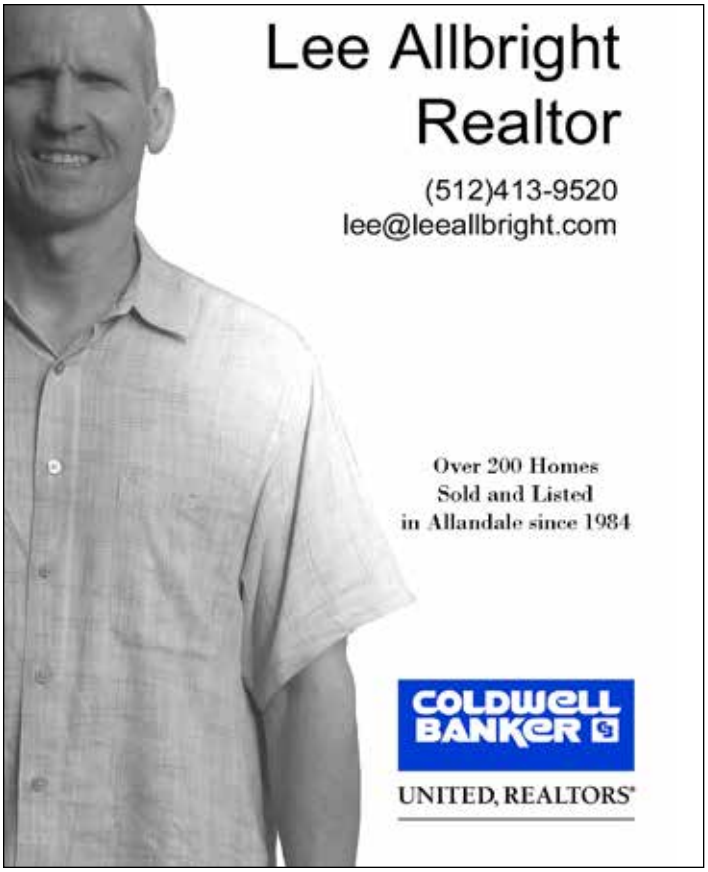
between drivers and cyclists.

There are plenty of reasons to ride your bike: it's good for your health, it's good for the environment, and possibly best of all, you can avoid Austin traffic. Centrally located residential areas are great for recreational cycling, and for using cycling as a primary method of transportation in commuting and running errands. As Bike Rights Austin develops, the campaign will provide materials for those hoping to use cycling as a primary mode of transportation.

Though the City of Austin is continually working to make its streets more bike friendly, bikers can still sometimes feel unwelcome. Cyclist casualties have risen in recent years as cycling has become more popular, and Texas leads the country as one of the top three states with the most serious and fatal accidents involving cyclists, with around 75% of bicyclist fatalities occurring during the spring and summer months in urban areas.

Bike Rights Austin hopes to improve these statistics, making Austin a more bike friendly city through education and awareness. Bike Rights Austin's main resource is accessible at www.bikerightsaustin.com and short tips and biking advice can be seen on the Bike Rights Austin Facebook page. Find information like what to do if you've been in an accident, where to ride when there's no bike lane, and quick tips for cars when sharing the road, with more information coming every week.

Bike Rights Austin is looking to engage the cycling community through participation with existing biking groups and community outreach. For more information, feel free to explore our main resource, or contact bikerightsaustin@gmail.com. Through collaboration between drivers and cyclists, we can make Austin a cleaner, fitter, faster city. ❖



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Tin Goat Mystery Solved

Kata Carbone

Whether we're driving, cycling, or walking, we can't help but notice the little traffic island at Shoal Creek Boulevard and Hancock Drive. Winter, spring, summer or fall, the flowers and decorations bring a smile. I've seen people sitting on the little green bench, shown here guarded by a colorful tin rooster.

About that bench. In the summer of 2010, one Ms. Wilcox placed an online ad to give away a bench she no longer wanted. She wrote about it in a blog about gratitude: "Today I'm driving my heavy park bench to the corner of Shoal Creek and Hancock. My first caller, Don, is adopting two foster kids, but he couldn't make it. The second caller, Henry, is doing a 'beautify Austin' project and thought my park bench would be a great addition. I'm taking a box of outgrown toys to Don's house and my old bench will become a seat for those who have biked one too many blocks."

And so Ms. Wilcox's park bench joined the island landscaping. Henry then turned his attention to seasonal decor with an online request, "Wanted: 2 small hay bales for beautification project on corner of Hancock Drive@Shoal Creek Drive," which explained a charming fall tableau with a bale of hay surrounded by pumpkins and fall decor.

Who was this Henry fellow? I found a

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June 2012 post in the Allandale Reporter archives, "My name is Henry Devin Guerra. I have been doing a beautification on the corner of Shoal Creek & Hancock Drive. I have permission from the City of Austin to maintain this for 5 years. I would like to post some small flags on this corner for the fourth of July; appreciate any donation of small flags. See you at the Parade!"

Another year went by. The traffic island flowers bloomed, the rosemary grew more lush, the crape myrtles lost their leaves, Christmas decorations came and went. Then the tin goats arrived in the rock circle, first a big one with fierce horns, then a little one, placidly facing oncoming traffic. These goats would change positions and decorations, disappear and reappear. When they didn't return after a few months, I felt downhearted wondering if someone had stolen the island menagerie. Did anyone else miss the tin goats?

This spring, Erin Silver posted to the Allandale listserv asking, "Who owns the family of metal goats on Shoal Creek that seem to get dressed up for all of the holidays? My kiddo totally loves them so I'd like to send a thank you to the owner." Wait, the goats were back? Nope, the island remains uninhabited. It turns out Erin was referring to a different goat display location.

All points bulletin: find the tin goat herders. First I tried finding Henry but gave up after three phone numbers failed to locate him. Since there's been no activity at the traffic island, I figured his 5 year Adopt-an-Island stint was up. (Anyone interested in carrying on as island steward?) Then I drove up and down SCB and found "Easter goat" and a number of other tin goats in Monica Wells' front yard at 5005 Shoal Creek Blvd.

It's easy to see why Erin Silver's 2 ½ year old daughter, Campbell, lights up as they approach Monica's house, "Mommy, mommy, mommy! I'm so excited to see what they have on!" Monica was delighted to hear that Campbell enjoys seeing her tin goats adorned with various seasonal props throughout the year. The display pretty much takes on a life of its own as passersby rearrange the goats in different configurations. Monica said, "I like to Keep Austin Laughing, and invite friends and neighbors to help the goats find fun new poses in my yard." The goats recently changed out of their Cinco de Mayo gear into summer togs. Monica will keep us posted on a goat naming contest she's planning.

Thank you Henry (wherever you are) for working so hard to beautify the traffic island and thank you, Monica, for your contribution to neighborhood entertainment. You both represent community spirit at its best. ❖

ANA Executive Committee Meetings

Held on the 1st Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. & are open to the public. Join us!

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Survey: What do Burnet-area Families Think?

Please take this survey about why you live in the Burnet Road area of Austin, and send the link to friends and neighbors, in particular families with children.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/78L732Z

The survey is conducted by Sustainable Neighborhoods (www.SNaustin.org), a local community organization that supports balanced demographics and retention of families in the Burnet Road area as new development occurs.

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Allandale Eating

Continued from page 7

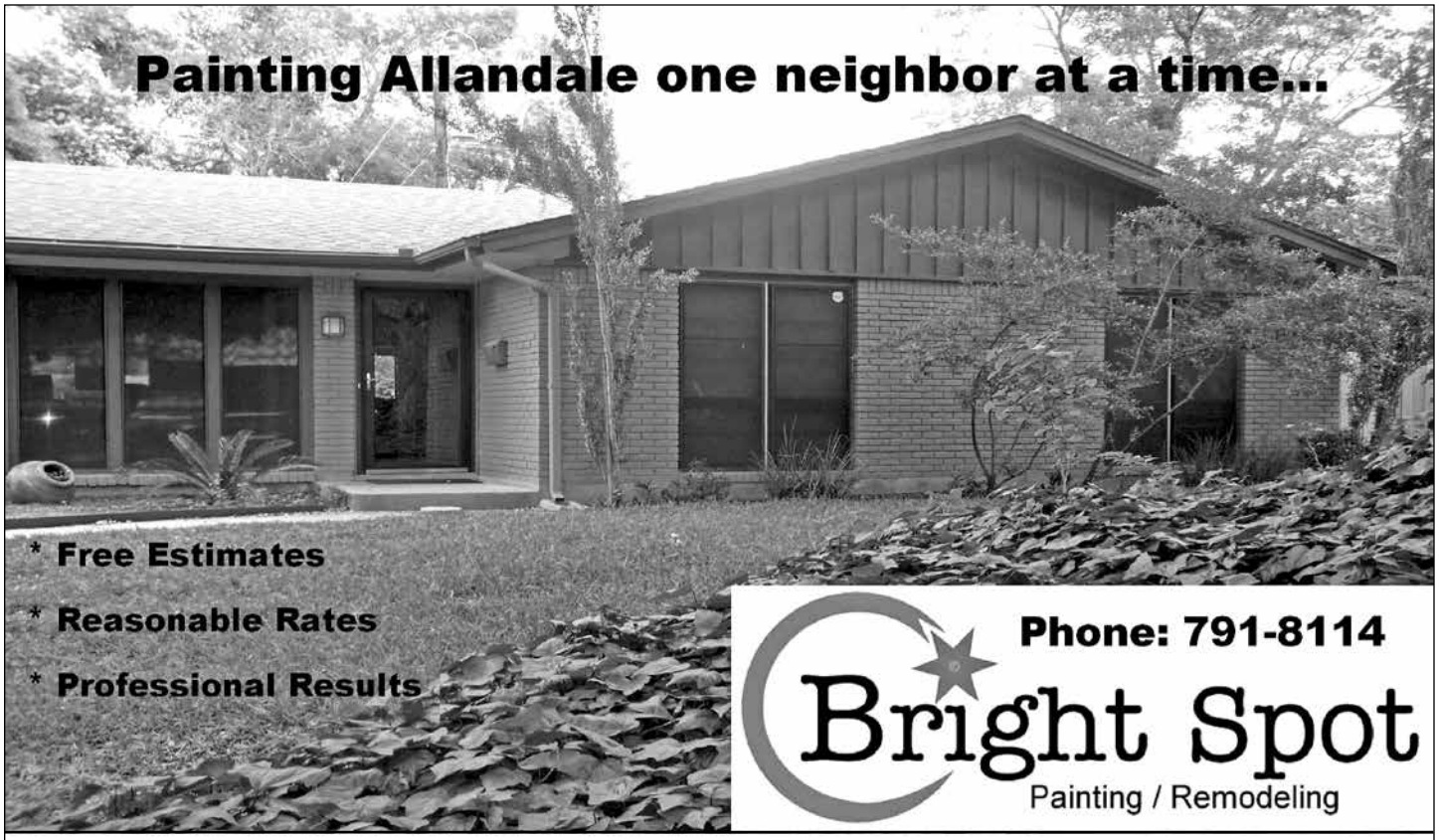
The Central Market playground did lose a tree in the May storms, but it's still a good place for kids to burn off some energy. However, eating outside is a constant fight with grackles dive bombing for food. Better is the Triangle with the green area and splashpad, as well as the new playground by Maudie's. If you get a spot on the Maudie's patio, you can watch your kids at the playground with your margarita safely in hand!

If you can convince your kids to be a bit International, Tarka has a great kids menu my girls really love, and not just the Indian-flare chicken nuggets with basmati rice; my girls go for the chicken tika masala! Give it a try.

The opposite of International is good old American bowling. Yes, bowling! Dart Bowl cranks up the AC and its food is actually fairly famous, what with Ethan Hawke there, enjoying cheese enchiladas (with saltines on the side, of course) in the movie Boyhood.

Phil's Icehouse

Finally, don't forget to mark your calendars for July 11 and visit any number of our nearby 7-Eleven's for a free Slurpee! Or every day, any day this summer, you can get Sonic's Happy Hour and half-price drinks, including slushes, from 2–4 p.m. Mmmm, a cherry limeade sounds good right now! Happy summer eating, everyone! ❖



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